

Ned Blip

by

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"NED BLIP" is a comic strip work-in-progress about a man out of step with the rest of humanity.

Because of my limitations as an artist, I've put the greater part of my efforts into developing scripts for this strip. Below can be found a few random samples. I realize that these wouldn't have the impact of an illustrated, finished product. But I would still greatly appreciate feedback. Thanks.

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The cast:

NED BLIP: Age 25. A dreamer whose skewed view of reality often shocks and confuses his more conventional family and friends. Married to his high school sweetheart Kelly.

KELLY BLIP: Age 25. Brainy, philosophical, long-suffering wife of Ned. Tends to over-think things.

RASH VENEER: Age 25. Ned's best friend. Troublemaking horndog with a major Audrey obsession.

AUDREY DOTT: Age 23. Kelly's best friend. Veteran beauty pageant contestant and aspiring supermodel. Often finds herself having to fend off Rash's advances.

THE REPORTER

Panel 1: A bubbly reporter and her cameraman stop Ned on the street.

REPORTER: Hi, sir. We're doing a story on the city's
finest snow cones!

Panel 2:

NED: *Just snow cones...?*

Panel 3:

NED: ...or snow cones in a noirish hell of greed,
infidelity, and murder...

Panel 4:

NED: ...where a seedy private eye gets blindsided
by a pretty face hiding deadly intentions?

Panel 5: Ned's words have succeeded in draining all the enthusiasm from
the reporter's face.

REPORTER: Just snow cones.

NED: [GRINNING] Sweet.

Panel 6:

REPORTER: So, um, do you have a favorite?

NED: Well, there's a truly divine one I would do
absolutely anything for!

Panel 7:

NED: [REVERENTIALLY] His name is Emo Philips.

Panel 8:

REPORTER: Emo Philips??? What has he to do with snow
cones?

NED: Absolutely nothing.

Panel 9: Ned pounds his fist into his palm. Eyeing him warily, the reporter begins to slowly move away.

NED: Which is why I must shun them as well!

REPORTER: [TO SELF] Inching away.

WHOM TO SAVE?

Panel 1: Kelly reads aloud from a book of questions. Ned listens intently.

KELLY: "A man, a woman, and a child are drowning
in a lake."

Panel 2:

KELLY: "If you could save just one, whom would
you choose?"

Panel 3: This is a question Ned feels unqualified to answer.

NED: No soap, Kell. I can't swim.

KELLY: This is hypothetical, Ned. Let's suppose
you CAN.

Panel 4: Having it explained to him, Ned sees this as an opportunity to
fulfill a fantasy at the same time.

NED: Cool! Can I also have on gold lame speedos
and swimming goggles?

KELLY: [ROLLS EYES] Whatever.

Panel 5: Magically, Kelly finds a now goggles-wearing Ned relaxing in a hot
tub with a woman and a large pitcher.

KELLY: Wh...What's this?!!

Panel 6: Ned pours himself a drink.

NED: I'm supposing the lake is a hot tub, the
woman Maria Sharapova, and the child
a pitcher of sangria.

Panel 7: Kelly eyes Ned narrowly.

KELLY: What about the drowning man?

NED: [SIGNALS FOR WAITER] Ah, yes. Garçon?

Panel 8: A waiter appears. Ned is now shown reading a menu.

NED: Bring me...let's see...the drowning man.

WAITER: Excellent choice, sir.

Panel 9: Waiter returns with gagging, drenched man. Kelly is dumb-founded.

NED: Looks like I save the MAN.

KARAOKE-DOKEY

Panel 1: Setting: Ned's living room. Mike in hand, Ned croons to the dulcet tones of a karaoke machine. Musical notes, all twisted and broken, surround him to help indicate the horribleness of his voice.

NED: *## "I gotta be me,
 I gotta be meeeeeee!"##*

Panel 2: Plugging their ears, Kelly and Audrey run for cover.

KELLY: Ned's kara-'off-key' is proof of a coming
 Armageddon.

AUDREY: Armageddon outta here!

Panel 3: Kelly looks downward and sees three rats running by.

KELLY: Well at least he's scared off all the vermin.

Panel 4: Audrey glances over at her nemesis Rash, who's stretched out on a recliner fast asleep.

AUDREY: Not quite.

Panel 5: Kelly devises a plan.

KELLY: [TO AUDREY] I have a plan. You distract
 Ned with something shiny...

Panel 6: Magically, we now find Kelly in full combat gear waving a machine gun.

KELLY: ...while I give that karaoke machine a
 bad case of "riddled beyond repair"!

Panel 7: Kelly has returned to normal. Audrey glances to the side with a sort of half-smile.

AUDREY: Might work. But I can't help having mixed
 feelings.

KELLY: Mixed feelings? How could you possibly
 have mixed...

Panel 8: Change of scene. Audrey has taken hold of the karaoke mike. Wincing, Kelly covers her ears even more tightly than before.

AUDREY: #...*Feeeelings!* *Whoa whoa whoa...*#

COMMITMENT

Panel 1: Ned and Rash lean back against a brick wall, talking.

NED: How was your date last night with that
 checkout girl?

RASH: It seemed to go well.

Panel 2:

RASH: But something told me it just wasn't
 gonna work out.

NED: Lemme guess. Was that something...

Panel 3: Ned's words continue in a narrative box at the top of panel 3. Below, we see Ned's depiction of what must have happened the night before: Rash sits at a restaurant table while his date, having risen from her chair, bids a not-so-fond farewell.

[NED]: ...*her voice?*

RASH'S DATE: This just isn't gonna work out.

Panel 4: We return to Ned and Rash at the brick wall.

NED: Face it, Rash. The closest thing you
 have to a relationship is a cardboard
 standup of Jessica Alba.

RASH: Aww, I had to trash that.

Panel 5: Expecting the worst, Ned tightly covers his ears.

RASH: She was startin' to get kinda...

NED: I don't wanna know!!!

Panel 6:

RASH: Maybe I'm just lookin' to find the right
 sort of babe.

NED: [ROLLING EYES] What sort is that?

Panel 7:

RASH: [PROUDLY] Audrey Dott.

Panel 8: A loud shriek covers the entire panel.

[VOICE]: **SHRIEEEEEEK!!!**

Panel 9: Change of scene: Kelly and Audrey sit at a café table for lunch. The shriek had come from Audrey, having in some way sensed Rash's words. Kelly, fingers plugging her ears, winces.

KELLY: Jeez, Aud! Is the calamari THAT bad?

AUDREY: I suddenly just got this chill up my spine.

CARRIED AWAY

Panel 1: Ned asks a question of a preoccupied Kelly.

NED: Kell, remember the day you advised me to get my head examined?

KELLY: [READING MAGAZINE] Which one?

Panel 2:

NED: Well, I had Rash take me through hypnotic regression...

KELLY: Rash? He's no therapist. Why he barely even qualifies as human!

Panel 3:

NED: Funny you should say that. For I *myself* am not quite human.

KELLY: Excuse me?

Panel 4:

NED: It's true. I've recovered clear memories of being carried off by wolves as an infant and living amongst them to this day.

Panel 5: Amused, Kelly plays along.

KELLY: Well, you have seemed rather absent through all the years I've known you...

Panel 6:

KELLY: ...to think you were never actually here.

NED: Precisely.

Panel 7: Kelly attempts to reason with Ned.

KELLY: Here's a thought: Memory is pliable. It can alter, for example, through the manipulation of others.

NED: True, true.

Panel 8:

KELLY: Even seemingly 'age-old' recollections may be suspect, especially if they sound preposterous.

NED: I'm way ahead of you...

Panel 9:

NED: ...my wolf brothers explained all that to me
AGES ago.

DEFINING MOMENTS

Panel 1: Sunglasses on, Ned relaxes on a lawn chair with a lemonade.

NED: "A man, a plan, a lawn chair--a tan!"

Panel 2: Clothes stained from gardening, a smiling Kelly approaches Ned offering a rake.

KELLY: *There's nothing like the tan--
of a leaf-rakin' man.*

Panel 3: Having risen from his chair, Ned starts to walk off.

NED: Rake leaves? Well I'll be seeing ya.

KELLY: Where do you think *you're* going?!

Panel 4: Ned stops, turns toward Kelly, and raises an index finger.

NED: "**rake** *noun* a dissolute man, roue."

Panel 5:

NED: "**leave** *verb* to go away from [to
leave a house]."

Panel 6: Waving goodbye, a sunny Ned departs.

NED: So ta ta, toots! I'm off to swill away
the hours in unabashed debauchery.

Panel 7: Kelly, eyes downcast, stands motionless with rake at her side.

Panel 8: In exact same position, Kelly begins to speak.

KELLY: "**rake** *verb* to use a rake to level..."

Panel 9: In this panel, an irate Kelly now wields the rake as if about to strike Ned down, ie. level him. Ned shrinks in fear.

KELLY: "...**A DISSOLUTE MAN!!!**"

NED: ACK!

Panel 10: Some time later. In foreground, we find a sunglasses-wearing Kelly relaxing on Ned's lawn chair with a lemonade. Ned can be seen in background raking the lawn.

KELLY: "leave *noun* time off from active duty."

THE ARTIST

Panel 1: Feeling his talents unappreciated, a smock-wearing Ned longs for recognition in the art world.

NED: There must be some way for a creatively
 bankrupt artist with a vision to finagle
 the adulation he so richly deserves.

Panel 2: Ned leans towards Kelly and speaks from the side of his mouth, as if sharing a secret.

NED: They say fame is a door which unlocks
 the key to obscurity.

KELLY: Who are "they"? And why are they off
 their meds?

Panel 3: Closeup of Ned standing an egg on his open palm.

NED: Look at this egg; it's staid perfection a
 sad anachronism in the light of more
 recent movements in art.

Panel 4: Ned smashes the egg down onto a canvas resting on a table.

NED: The modernist breaks down such outmoded
 constructs...

Panel 5: Ned mixes the egg with his fingers.

NED: ...only to reassemble the fragments into
 a form more in tune with the zeitgeist.

Panel 6: Ned proudly displays the canvas with its dripping mess as a new work of art. Kelly is unimpressed.

NED: I call this piece: "Tempura Tantrum".
 What do you think?

KELLY: I think someone in this room wouldn't
 know art from a hole in the wall.

Panel 7: Ned turns and stares at the wall behind them.

Panel 8: Some time later. Sledgehammer in hand, Ned proudly shows off his latest work of art -- a large hole in the wall. A fuming Kelly, head in hand, locks her gaze on Ned's sledgehammer.

NED: A breakthrough!

KELLY: [GRITTING TEETH] And sure to go up in value following the artist's untimely death.

BENCH NOTION

Panel 1: Sitting on a park bench, Ned strikes up an uncharacteristically serious conversation with Kelly.

NED: Ever wonder what it would be like to be someone *other* than yourself?

Panel 2:

NED: A Tibetan monk, a New Jersey housewife...?

Panel 3:

NED: To inhabit a life and hold to beliefs totally foreign from your own?

Panel 4:

NED: Wouldn't this expose many of our own beliefs and notions of self as simply the products of an accident of birth?

Panel 5: Kelly begins her usual response to one of Ned's "insights". She stops herself mid-sentence when she realizes Ned may actually be making sense.

KELLY: That's the *stupidest* thing I've...oh, wait... sorry, force of habit.

NED: [DEADPAN] Understandable, given my usual brand of unbridled lunacy.

Panel 6: Closeup of Kelly looking upward in thought.

KELLY: Let's see, to imagine oneself as disparate individuals as a means of defining the forces which shape us.

Panel 7:

KELLY: Such a discipline might enable us to develop an expanded view of our selves and those around us -- a 'bird's-eye' view.

Panel 8: Wider shot reveals Ned now doing a headstand on the ground beside the bench.

NED: Or how 'bout a 'foot's-eye' view to get
to the bottom of things?

Panel 9: Closeup of a deadpan Kelly looking down in Ned's direction.

KELLY: Of course, we must also weigh in the
distinct advantages of NOT thinking
like someone else.